

Newsline

December 1999

Weather Or Not?

The system lets us know!

More efficient road maintenance and safer travel are two major benefits from Montana's use of the Remote Weather Informational System (RWIS).

RWIS is a combination of technologies and decision-making techniques using detailed historical and real-time road and weather information to improve the efficiency of highway maintenance operations, and provide current weather information to travelers.

The weather stations consist of a variety of equipment, everything from sensors embedded in the pavement, video cameras and visibility sensors for fog, snowdrift and other hazardous conditions which effect driving safety, to wind speed indicators and other measuring devices.

Information derived from these stations, in conjunction with visual observations by maintenance crews, is used by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) to assist in developing snow and ice control material applications, managing maintenance manpower and equipment for more efficient utilization, and scheduling road repair work based on pavement temperature data, among other things.

RWIS information is also shared with the National

Weather Service (NWS) to help provide more reliable forecasts to the public.

MDT experimented with RWIS in the late seventies and early eighties but didn't get really involved with the systems until 1993.

MDT has 59 weather stations strategically located throughout the state in areas with extreme weather conditions, or at locations far removed from MDT maintenance section houses.

Real-time RWIS data is available to the public through a clickable state map on MDT's internet website at www.mdt.state.mt.us/rdrpt/rdrpt.htm.

The information includes the following conditions:

Weather:

- Temperature
- Relative Humidity
- Dew Point
- Wind Gusts
- Wind Direction
- Average Wind Speed
- Precipitation Accumulation and Rate
- Visibility

Road:

- Surface Temperature
- Subsurface Temperature
- Ice Percentage
- Status (Dry, Wet, Icy, etc)

The MacDonald Pass station includes a camera that provides additional visual information. MDT will install additional cameras at other key RWIS locations in the future.



RWIS STATION

People using the website data must remember this is raw data and some of the information may not be accurate due to communication anomalies and periodic equipment calibration requirements.

The information is also site specific and conditions may be different up or down the road.

RWIS is one example of MDT efforts to use technology to improve rural travel and provide critical information to the public.

For more information on RWIS contact Mike Bousliman, MDT Maintenance Division, (406) 444-6159 or e-mail mbousliman@state.mt.us, 2701 Prospect Avenue, Helena, MT 59620. To inquire about other Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) efforts contact Ross Tervo, MDT Planning Division, (406) 444-9248 or e-mail rtervo@state.mt.us, at the same address.

Partnerships for Sharing Costs

Montana's state and local governments are faced with numerous challenges related to delivering and maintaining adequate highway and transportation infrastructure. In almost all of Montana's communities, and at all levels of government, infrastructure needs outstrip limited government resources. Consequently, MDT and local governments are exploring new approaches for the financing of transportation infrastructure. These new approaches include government-to-government and public-private partnerships for cost sharing. These tools, in addition to supplementing federal and state resources, provide local governments the ability to influence the timing and scope of highway construction projects to support local economic development goals and land-use choices.

Local governments have the option of implementing any of several methods of innovative financing to raise funds for transportation improvement costs. Some of the more common financing methods include creating Special Improvement Districts, Tax Increment Financing, Local Option Taxes, and assessing Development Impact Fees. Once a revenue generating mechanism is established, this funding stream can be used to invest directly or to partner with the state on qualifying projects.

• **Special/Rural Improvement Districts (SID or RID)** - Local governments in Montana have the power to create these districts and order the construction or rehabilitation of transportation facilities when the project is in the public interest. An Improvement District allows financing through the

sale of tax exempt municipal bonds where the costs are recovered by placing special assessment taxes on properties benefiting from the improvements. In instances where projects cross jurisdictional boundaries, Multi-Jurisdictional Improvement Districts may be created.

• **Tax Increment Financing (TIF)** - Similar to Improvement Districts, TIFs recover costs through property taxes. TIFs are financed through revenue bonds which are paid off through a property tax assessed *after* the property increases in value as a result of the improvements.



• **Local Option Taxes**- Local governments may impose local taxes on certain sales and services, including a gasoline tax, vehicle tax, and retail sales and services (resort tax).

• **Development Impact Fees** - MDT and local governments often require developers of new property to provide funding for a portion of the transportation improvements needed as a result of their development. Assessing developers impact fees allows growth to pay for itself.

Bozeman's North 19th Avenue - Practical Partnering

A recent example of a successful transportation public-private partnership is the North 19th Avenue corridor in Bozeman.

These improvements are a win for Bozeman, the state and the developers. North 19th Avenue between Oak Street and Baxter Lane was originally

planned and constructed as a 3 lane connector route from the newly completed North 19th Avenue/I-90 Interchange to Bozeman's major east/west through routes, Durston Road and Main Street. After construction of the interchange, this corridor became the focus of large development consistent with local planning goals. As individual developers approached the City of Bozeman and MDT for platting approvals and roadway approach permits, both MDT and the City recognized the development would have a significant impact on the existing transportation system. To address these impacts, MDT, the City of Bozeman, and local developers negotiated

and entered agreements which provided for design, construction, and funding of transportation improvements necessary to safely serve the planned growth along the corridor. As a result of the partnering, the local developers are cost participating in upgrading North 19th Avenue

to a 5-lane facility between Oak St. and Baxter Lane, installing two new traffic signals, and improving geometric design of intersecting roadways. In all, the developers benefiting from these improvements are funding a significant portion of the \$800,000 transportation improvement project.

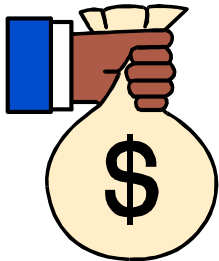
Every dollar the State and local governments recover through cost participation and partnering can be put to good use for much needed overall transportation system preservation and improvements. And, the developers benefit too, as their customers don't have to wait many years for improvements before having a safe and improved facility to reach their stores and services.

If you would like additional information about public-private partnerships or a copy of MDT's "*Guidelines and Mechanisms for Transportation Partnerships*" please contact Sandra Straehl at 444-7692 or ssstraehl@state.mt.us.



Capital Assistance Program

The formal capital assistance application process is in full swing for Fiscal Year (FY) 2001. The Capital Assistance Program is available to any eligible recipient who provides transportation services to the elderly and persons with disabilities.



Pre-applications have been received from over sixty prospective recipients. Workshops were held in October to distribute applications and assist recipients in preparing their formal applications. Capital assistance applications for FY 2001 are due to MDT's Transit Section no later than Tuesday, February 1, 2000. Applications will be reviewed by the Transit Section and the Selection and Screening Committee by March 15 with the results to the successful recipients by the end of April, 2000.

Montana Transit Association (MTA) Holds Annual Business Meeting

The Montana Transit Association (MTA) held its annual business meeting September 1 and 2 at the Park Plaza Hotel in Helena. The MTA recently hired the Missoula-Ravalli Transportation Management Association (MR TMA), headed by Executive Director Noel Larrivee as the MTA Coordinator.

Agenda items discussed included: the MTA Coordinator's role and responsibilities; MTA's FY 2000 budget; a rotational schedule to hold the annual Statewide Bus Rodeo in Missoula, Billings and Great Falls; MTA's annual election of officers; a new award called the *Orval Meyer Award for Transit Excellence*; and MTA's spring conference in 2000.

The new MTA officers for 2000 are:

President: Steve Earle, Mountain Line, Missoula
Vice President: Deanna Thielman, Eagle Transit, Kalispell
Secretary: Jana Rogers, Galavan, Bozeman
Treasurer: Mike Shea, Butte-Silver Bow

If you need additional information, please contact Ann Andre (MR TMA) at (406) 523-4944 or mrtma@montana.com or Janis Winston, MDT Transit Section at (406) 444-4210 or jwinston@state.mt.us.

Statewide Bus Rodeo Winner

Richard Dahlen, a bus driver for Great Falls Transit, took first place in this year's statewide Bus Rodeo on August 22. Richard's first place prize was an all expense paid trip to the National Bus Rodeo held October 9 at Disney World Speedway in Orlando, Florida!

"I feel very honored to have represented all the bus systems in Montana as an ambassador for transportation," Dahlen said.



Richard Dahlen

In Orlando, Richard competed in a group of forty two drivers and came in 9th in the nation! Dahlen reported "The rodeo was a huge success for me in the fact that I finished in ninth place, and I am very proud of this accomplishment. I feel my success was due to the fact that I worked hard and had wonderful support from all Montanans!"

Richard extends a very special thank you to MDT and the Montana Transit Association for sponsoring these events.

Rural Passenger Transportation Needs Study Begins

MDT's Transit Section has recently awarded a contract for the Rural Passenger Transportation Needs Study to Leigh, Scott, and Cleary (LSC) of Colorado Springs.

A.T. Stoddard and Corrinne Donahue of LSC have conducted transit consulting work throughout Montana over the past 10 years and their knowledge of transit in Montana will greatly benefit this project. LSC has conducted similar projects in Colorado and Arkansas.

The project will define and determine needs for transit in rural Montana and inventory current providers across the state to identify areas low in service. MDT staff will use this information in its selection and screening process, and to forecast future needs for MDT-funded transit services.

This will be the first needs study conducted for rural transit in Montana. The Transit Section anticipates updating the study periodically.



Traffic data....who needs it?



Traffic data....who needs it? If you live in the world of roads and highways, you can't live without it. Planners, engineers, and enforcement people all depend on detailed traffic data to ensure we have safe, sound, and efficient highways to travel. Traffic data is used not only by transportation professionals, but also in other sectors such as developers, real estate agencies, government agencies, and private individuals, just to name a few.

Traffic data is not just a matter of counting the number of vehicles that pass over a particular spot on a particular road. It also involves determining the types of vehicles, number of axles, vehicle weights, travel patterns, speeds, and number of people in the vehicle. As time goes on this information is needed in more locations and in ever increasing detail.

The Traffic Data Collection Section (TDCS) in the Transportation Planning Division is responsible for developing and managing traffic data collection programs. It also collects and processes the information as well as disseminate it to those who need it. This involves a highly knowledgeable and qualified team of field data collectors, electronic technicians, and statisticians to get the job done.

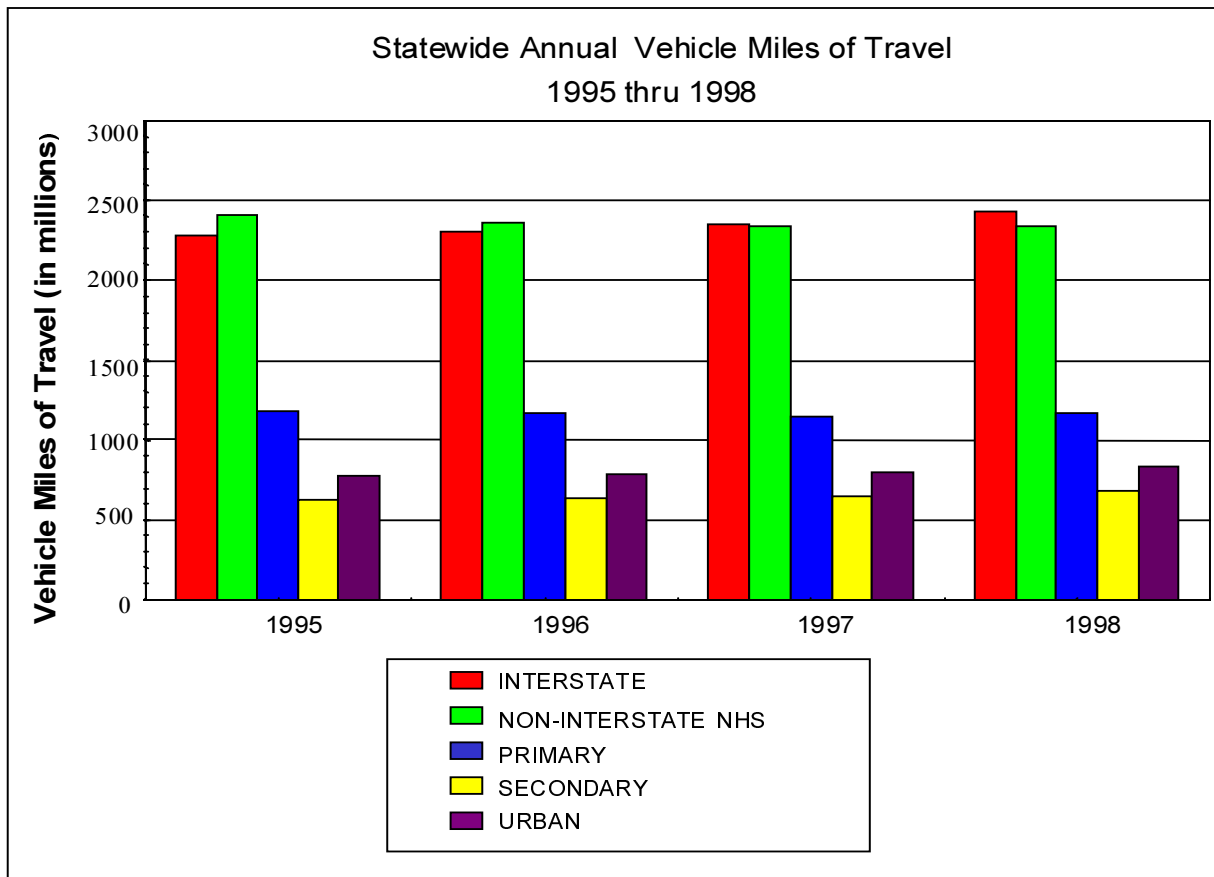
The volume of traffic data needed has increased steadily in recent years. New and innovative methods of data collection have been developed to tackle the job. MDT has risen to the occasion by employing state-of-the-art technology.

An example of this technology involves vehicle sensing equipment installed in the roadbed. Motorists barely notice the equipment as they pass over it, but the equipment is collecting a wealth of information. Some of these locations collect traffic data 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Depending on the type of equipment, data such as the number of vehicles, number of axles, type of vehicle, speed, and weight are collected and stored at the site. Periodically, technicians "dial up" the site and download the data from their office in Helena. The data is processed through powerful software programs, analyzed by statisticians, and placed in a variety of report formats ready for use.

Today, the TDCS remotely collects traffic data at 71 sites around the state. Thanks to new and affordable advances in technology, six new sites were installed this fall. While these sites represent a great deal of the total information gathered, the TDCS's job by no means ends there. Throughout a typical year, various types of traffic data are collected at 4000 sites on more than 13,000 miles of road across Montana.

Traffic data collection is a never ending process essential in assuring our roads and highways continue to be designed, built, and maintained in a manner that serves us all well.

For more information about traffic data programs, contact Dan Bisom at (406)444-6122 or dbisom@state.mt.us.



CTEP Summary through Federal FY99

Montana's Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP) was established in 1991 following the passage of Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and was perpetuated in the Transportation Equality Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21). Under CTEP, 327 projects have been approved by MDT. MDT has sub-allocated \$34,671,000 in federal-aid transportation enhancement funds to Local and Tribal Government (LTG) from FFY 1992 through FFY 1999. As of October 1999 LTGs have obligated \$25,159,000 of the sub-allocated funds to specific enhancement projects and MDT has reimbursed local government \$16,009,000 for eligible enhancement work completed.

Of the 12 eligible categories, the development of pedestrian and bicycle facilities has been the most popular eligibility category as evidenced by the dollar amount obligated to projects of this type. This category includes public pedestrian and bicycle routes, pathways, walkways, and related amenities. These bicycle and pedestrian improvements are for transportation purposes and generally provide a continuous route from one point to another and are not intended for recreational purposes. The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks administers the state's Recreational Trails Program which is a funding source for bike-ped and other recreational projects.

Qualifying Activity	% Of Total	*Obligation
Pedestrian/ Bicycle Facilities	69.5%	\$17.48
Scenic/ Historic Site/ Easement Acquisition	0.5%	\$0.11
Scenic/ Historic Highway Program	1.0%	\$0.25
Landscaping –Other Scenic Beautification	18.9%	\$4.74
Historic Preservation	2.0%	\$0.50
Rehabilitation/ Operation of Historic Buildings/ Structures/ Facilities	4.1%	\$1.02
Preserve Abandoned Railroad Corridors	3.5%	\$0.86
Control/ Remove Outdoor Ads	0.0%	\$0.00
Archaeological Planning/ Research	0.3%	\$0.07
Mitigate Water Pollution	0.6%	\$0.13
Safety & Education for Bike/ Pedestrian	0.0%	\$0.00
Establishment of Museums	0.0%	\$0.00

* In Millions of Dollars



CTEP On the Net

CTEP is now on the World Wide Web! A link from the MDT home page to CTEP is now available at: www.mdt.state.mt.us under 'Places to Visit'.

The following forms are available for downloading in either WordPerfect or MS Word formats. Over the next few months additional forms and other information will be available so check back often to see what is new! If you have suggestions e-mail them to us. Our address is on the CTEP page.

Forms in PDF Fill-in Format ; CTEP Project Application*; **MS Word Format;** CTEP Project Application, **MS Word Format and Word Perfect Format;**

Professional Services Agreement, Certificate Of Consultant (Exhibit A), Certificate Of City/County (Exhibit B), Compliance With State And Federal Civil Rights Laws (Exhibit C), Required Contract Provisions, Federal-Aid Construction Contracts, EEO Affirmative Action Requirements on Federal & Federal-Aid Construction Contracts, Proposal, Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) Requirements, Schedule Of Participation By DBEs, CTEP Special Provisions, and Local Agency Certification of Bid Review Procedure.

**Requires Adobe Acrobat Reader 4.0 to use as a fill-in form*

CTEP SUB-ALLOCATIONS UPDATE

Federal Fiscal Year 2000 sub-allocations for CTEP funds will be mailed in January. The sub-allocations will be calculated as soon as eligible local and tribal governments inform MDT of their intention to participate.

Eligible local governments are all counties, cities of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd class, and tribal governments of the seven Indian Reservations.

Mike Davis, the CTEP Planner, will be mailing the Local Program Administrator forms to all local and tribal government elected officials. This form is intended for the local officials to indicate their intention to participate in the enhancement program (CTEP) for the coming year and designate their local program administrator. These forms are due to MDT by December 20, 1999. Local and tribal government elected officials must reaffirm the identity of their current local program administrator or appoint a new local program administrator.

CTEP application submittal schedules for the year 2000 are similar to last year's. Each local or tribal government must submit its CTEP applications based on the following schedule:

March	<i>Financial District 1:</i>	Proposal due date.
April	<i>Financial District 1:</i>	Internal MDT CTEP project approval process.
May	<i>Financial District 2:</i>	Proposal due date.
June	<i>Financial District 2:</i>	Internal MDT CTEP project approval process.
July	<i>Financial District 3:</i>	Proposal due date.
August	<i>Financial District 3:</i>	Internal MDT CTEP project approval process.
September	<i>Financial District 4:</i>	Proposal due date.
October	<i>Financial District 4:</i>	Internal MDT CTEP project approval process.
November	<i>Financial District 5:</i>	Proposal due date.
December	<i>Financial District 5:</i>	Internal MDT CTEP project approval process.

If you are not sure of your financial district or the name of your Local Program Administrator contact Sid Curnow, Program Coordinator, at (406) 444-9459 or e-mail: scurnow@state.mt.us.

FINAL 2000 STIP DELAYED

(STIP = Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan)

The release of the final version of the 2000 STIP has been delayed. Typically, MDT releases the Final STIP by the beginning of the federal fiscal year, October 1. *However this is **not** a typical year.*

The Department expects to release the final 2000 STIP to the public after the February 2000 Transportation Commission meeting. The delay will ensure an expanded transportation program due to the increase in funding under the TEA-21 federal legislation. As a result of the 60% increase in overall funding, additional projects were added to the program which made it difficult to finalize the program through the next three federal fiscal years. The 2000 STIP will accurately reflect the planned program.

If you have requested a final version of the 2000 STIP, we haven't forgotten you! The 2000 STIP should be available for mailing around March 1, 2000. To request a copy of the final 2000 STIP, contact Jeff Ebert at (406)444-7639 or 1-800 714-7296 or jebert@state.mt.us.

STATEWIDE ROAD CONDITIONS

***1-800-226-ROAD
OR (406) 444-6339
1-800-335-7592(TTY)***

INTERNET: www.mdt.state.mt.us/
traveler information

***Conditions on the
Interstate and major passes are
reported at 7:00 am.***

HIGHWAY PATROL EMERGENCY

1-800-525-5555

****STUDED TIRES ARE LEGAL
IN MONTANA
OCTOBER 1 - MAY 31.***

County Maps in Cyber Space!

Montana's county maps are now available on the Internet. These maps may be accessed through MDT's homepage (www.mdt.state.mt.us) under "County Maps" and viewed using portable document format (PDF) files such as Adobe Acrobat Reader.

These general highway county maps show public roads on a land grid of township, range and section lines. Surface types are shown for all roads. The maps also indicate cities, towns, national forests, federal reservations, game refuges, lakes, reservoirs, streams, railroads and mountain peaks with elevations. Drainage and alignment of roads are checked with aerial photographs when needed.

All information is based on the latest available data. The actual status of the roads may differ depending on when the last county inventory was completed. Hard copies of these maps may also be ordered from MDT. Please see the [MDT Map Directory](#) for more information.

Maps of Montana's urban areas and incorporated cities and towns will also be available in a similar format on MDT's homepage in the near future. For more information on these maps, please contact Zia Kazimi at 444-6111 or zkazimi@state.mt.us.



Newsline News!

If you currently receive a hard copy of the Newsline and would like to receive it electronically please provide your e-mail address to our editor-JoanScott- (jscott@state.mt.us).

The Newsline is also available on the Internet at www.mdt.state.mt.us.

Transportation Planning Division Telephone Numbers

Only the most frequently requested numbers are listed here. For an area or person not listed, call **1-800-714-7296** (in Montana only), or **(406) 444-3423**. TTY (406) 444-7696 or 1-800-335-7592

Administrator (Patricia Saindon).....	444-3143
Bike/Pedestrian (Jennifer Dalrymple).....	444-9273
CTEP (Mike Davis).....	444-4383
Mapping (Jim Erickson).....	444-6119
Multimodal Planning (Dick Turner).....	444-7289
Projects (Jeff Ebert).....	444-7639
Public Involvement (Dave Dreher).....	444-6245
Safety Programs-Drug/Alcohol, Occupant Protection (Priscilla Sinclair).....	444-7417
Secondary Roads (Gary Larson).....	444-6110
Road Inventory & Mapping (Zia Kazimi).....	444-6111
Traffic Safety (Albert Goke).....	444-7301
Traffic Data (Dan Bisom).....	444-6122
Transit (Janis Winston).....	444-4210
Urban Planning (Lynn Zanto).....	444-3445
ITS Planning (Ross Tervo).....	444-9248
Newsline Editor (Joan Scott)	444-7307



Our **sincere apologies** to anyone who used the 800# to request publications over the last several months. Due to a malfunction of the phone line, messages could be left but not retrieved! The problem was corrected at the end of August and we are ready, willing, and able to take those publication requests!

Speaking of Publications.....there are some new publications available:

- 1) Transportation Acronym Guide (TAG)
- 2) 1999 TranPlan 21 Annual Report
- 3) 1999 Guide to Public Transportation

These publications are available on MDT's website at www.mdt.state.mt.us/recent_publications or by calling 1-800-714-7296.

Coming soon:

- 1999 Public Involvement Telephone Survey
- 1999 Stakeholder Survey
- 1999 Montana Rest Area Plan

5000 copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of 32¢ per copy for a total of \$1598.72 which includes \$580.00 for printing and \$1018.72 for distribution. Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided upon request.

Montana Minute

5,699 miles (8.1%) of all Montana's roads open to public travel are on Indian Reservations.

Flathead County has the most roads open to public travel in Montana with 2,510 miles.
Treasure County has the least with 290 miles.

MDT maintains 8,141 miles (11.6%) of roads open to public travel.

The combined population of Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming equals only 1.5% of the nation's population. The combined land area is 13.3% of the nation's land area.

17 of Montana's 129 incorporated cities have less than 5 miles of roads open to public travel.
60 cities have less than 10 miles.

Montana Department of Transportation
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